
Executive Summary

Eastern Region
SR 291 Route Development Plan
Freya Street to Scotts Valley Road

SR 291 Route Development Plan

Route Development Plans

A Route Development Plan (RDP) is a long-range roadway improvement strategy designed to address future, as well as existing safety and capacity problems on a section of state highway. RDP's include a comprehensive assessment of how a roadway currently functions, as well as a projection of how it may operate 20 years into the future. Public input, safety, mobility, land use, and environmental concerns are the primary elements evaluated in a RDP. The Washington State Department of Transportation Eastern Region Planning Office utilizes a four-phased process to develop an RDP for a state highway within its jurisdiction. This process is further detailed in the *"Introduction"* section of this RDP.

Route Development Plan Location

This Route Development Plan addresses the section of SR 291, a Non-NHS route, extending from Division Street (MP 0.00) to a northwestern limit of Scotts Valley Road in Tum Tum (MP 22.31). This Plan also addresses the section of Francis Avenue from Division Street (MP 0.00) back to an eastern limit at Freya Street (MP Back -2.48). The decision was made to look at this particular section of Francis Avenue because it provides a connected highway network from US 395 (North Spokane Corridor) to US 2 (Division Street) to SR 291 (Francis Avenue west).

This section of the SR 291 corridor serves northwest Spokane, the northern Spokane County community of Nine Mile Falls, and the southern Stevens County communities of Suncrest and Tum Tum.

Plan Purpose and Need

The route development plan will address the growing traffic and safety concerns on SR 291 within the study limits by identifying existing and future deficiencies, and propose feasible solutions that the public supports and that will guide transportation investment decisions. SR 291 facilitates traffic as a direct route to SR 231, US 2, and US 395. SR 291 is a major commuter route, connecting rapidly developing communities in northwestern Spokane County and southern Stevens County to the City of Spokane.

Summary of Findings & Recommendations

This Route Development Plan divides the corridor into three distinct sections called “logical breaks”. The breaks are based on access control, roadway characteristics, and scope of development. To accommodate existing and projected growth and enhance safety, this route development plan recommends the following ***long-range improvements***:

Freya Street to Nine Mile Road Wye, MP Back -2.48 to MP 3.07

- Construct a consistent 5-lane roadway section, 4 through lanes with a center two – way left turn lane, from Havana Street to Division Street
- Widen Francis Avenue corridor 30-50 feet to the south from Wall Street to Belt Street and construct a 7-lane section along the Francis Avenue corridor
- Construct bike lane connections from NSC interchanges to City bike routes as per the Spokane Regional Pedestrian/Bike Plan
- Purchase Access Rights and consolidate approaches where feasible
- Support and Coordinate efforts with Spokane County’s proposed Northwest Urban connector

Nine Mile Road Wye to Charles Road, MP 3.07 to MP 9.20

- Construct a flyover ramp for Assembly Street, a City of Spokane facility, at the Francis Avenue-Assembly Street-Nine Mile Road Wye MP 3.07
- Construct a 4-lane undivided limited access roadway section on a new alignment from MP 6.85 to Vicinity Nine Mile Falls (Phase 1 – Nine Mile Bypass)
- Support and Coordinate efforts with Spokane County’s proposed Northwest Urban connector
- Work with the City of Spokane on development of the Barnes Road connection
- Purchase access rights and implement partial access control

Charles Road to Scotts Valley Road, MP 9.20 to MP 22.31

- Purchase limited access control and construct a four-lane undivided highway on a new alignment from Charles Road to Swenson Road (Phase 2 – Nine Mile Bypass)
- Construct passing lanes both northbound and southbound from Wylie Drive to Moriah Drive Vicinity

To enhance safety, and provide partial capacity relief, this route development plan recommends the following ***short to mid-range feasible improvements***:

Freya Street to Nine Mile Road Wye, MP Back -2.48 to MP 3.07

- Pursue Driveway Consolidation along Francis Avenue in the vicinity of 5-Mile Heights Shopping Center (MP 1.23)
- Install Traffic Signal/Roundabout at “A” Street & Francis Ave when warrants are met (MP 2.00)
- Extend Right Turn Lane for additional storage and re-configure traffic islands at Indian Trail Road (MP 2.19)
- Install new 2-phase Traffic Signal or other mitigation at Assembly Street & Nine Mile Rd. (*Developer proposed signal*) (MP 3.07)
- Construct Right Turn Lanes, Left Turn Lane, and Two-Way-Left-Turn-Lanes where warranted

Nine Mile Road Wye to Charles Road, MP 3.07 to MP 9.20

- Rifle Club Road Intersection (MP 3.85) - Construct Acceleration Lane southbound
- Seven Mile Rd. (MP 5.22) - Construct Acceleration Lane southbound
- Construct Right Turn Lanes, and Two-Way-Left-Turn-Lanes where warranted

Charles Road to Scotts Valley Road, MP 9.20 to MP 22.31

- Charles Rd. to Little Spokane River Bridge #291/6 (MP 9.20 to MP 10.04) - Construct Left Turn Lane at Spokane House and a Passing Lane Northbound from Charles Rd. to MP 9.85; increasing posted speed limit from 35 mph to 50 mph
- Nine Mile Vic. and at Swenson Rd – install Intelligent Transportation System - Road Hazard Advisory System
- Swenson Rd. (MP 12.98) - Lengthen Right Turn Lane back to MP 12.78 (End of climbing lane)
- Increase public awareness of the Swenson Cutover Connection, a Spokane and Stevens County facility, as an alternate route
- Construct a Two-Way-Left-Turn-Lane through the Suncrest community from Swenson Road to Wylie Drive (MP 12.98 to MP 14.35)

- Construct Left Turn Lanes, and remaining Two-Way-Left-Turn-Lanes where warranted

Implementation Plan

This RDP identifies a wide variety of proposed improvements that address both congestion relief and safety enhancements over the next 20 years and beyond. This plan recommends that the following implementation steps be utilized:

Short-range Proposals (0 - 6 Years)

Develop a prioritization list with notes on each improvement for the high benefit, short-range proposed projects.

Mid-range Proposals (6 - 10 Years)

Outline key and/or high benefit proposed recommendations made for the next 6-10 years. Work with partner agencies on getting the recommended solutions that are under local jurisdiction into their 6 year plans.

Long-range Proposals (10 – 20 Years)

Outline the ultimate solutions and take steps to get them integrated into the Highway Systems Plan. Begin scoping, securing funding, and ensure that short and mid-term projects are building toward ultimate plans. Support and coordinate with Spokane County on the proposed Northwest Urban Connector.

A detailed summary of the Implementation Plan is provided on pages 60-61.

Current funding of WSDOT highway projects (based on existing revenues) is limited to maintenance, preservation, and traffic operations projects. SR 291 is identified in the 2003 - 2022 Highway System Plan Eastern Region 20-year Mobility Strategies “Congested” Non-NHS list, the Eastern Region 20-year Mobility Strategies “Congested” Non-NHS list, and the “Access Management for Developed Corridors” list. The current programmed budget does not include funding for long-term improvements on this segment of 291.

While committed to operate an efficient, safe, and coordinated corridor, WSDOT Eastern Region continues to pursue funding for proposed improvements. Periodically, during future WSDOT Highway System Plan updates, proposed improvement projects on SR 291 will be re-assessed during funding prioritization in preservation, safety, mobility, economic initiative, and environmental retrofit programs.

Contacts

We encourage your comments and input on this and future Route Development Plans.

Please contact us at:

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